



Economic Opportunity Assessment

District of Lillooet, Electoral Areas A & B, Northern St'át'imc

Prepared for: Squamish-Lillooet Regional District

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Economic Opportunity Assessment project was launched in late June 2008 to identify economic development opportunities that could be implemented to benefit the broader study area and help facilitate local economic collaboration and cooperation among all study area local governments.¹ The Squamish-Lillooet Regional District (SLRD) coordinated the study as part of its Regional Growth Strategy initiative. The study area included the District of Lillooet, Electoral Areas A and B, Sekw'el'was (Cayoos Creek), Xwisten (Bridge River), T'it'q'et (Lillooet), Ts'kw'aylaxw (Pavilion), Xaxl'ip (Fountain) and Tsalalh (Seton Lake). The short-term, two-month study had two main components:

- **Economic Base Analysis:** Project consultants completed an Economic Base Analysis of the study area in July 2008. It provided a 'snap shot' of local labour market trends, including demographics, employment, wages and capacity measures. It also provided a summary analysis of four key local business sectors identified by the project's advisory committee – tourism, forestry, agriculture and energy. A high level SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis of local economic development constraints, opportunities and other issues was also completed as part of this component. The Base Analysis informed the project's second component, the Economic Opportunity Assessment.
- **Economic Opportunity Assessment:** The study's second component, and the focus of this report, was a stakeholder-driven identification, assessment and prioritization of potential economic development opportunities for the study area. This component utilized a structured decision-making process to identify and then prioritize economic development opportunities that could be implemented to benefit the broader study area and help facilitate expanded economic planning and cooperation among all study area local governments.

The economic development opportunities summarized in this report were identified, evaluated and prioritized using a facilitated and structured decision-making process involving a project advisory committee made up of regional economic development stakeholders. Given project time constraints, the advisory committee was not formally appointed by representative agencies and governments and not all invited stakeholders were able to attend all three project meetings. Members were not considered formal representatives from the local governments and organizations for which they work. The 10-member committee included SLRD and District of Lillooet staff, SLRD Director Area B, the president of the Lillooet Chamber of Commerce, and administrative staff from the Lillooet Tribal Council, St'át'imc Chiefs Council, Upper St'át'imc Language and Culture Society and T'it'q'et Economic Development Board.

Eighteen economic development opportunities were evaluated using the decision process. The three opportunities profiled in this report ranked the highest through both a technical and value-based assessment. Five additional 'tier-two' opportunities are more briefly summarized. The top three prioritized economic development opportunities are:

1. Joint Economic Development Strategy

A comprehensive, Joint Economic Development Strategy is a critical component for the effective, long-term and sustainable economic development of the study area. To be developed in the medium-term (i.e., 2009 - 2010) through a multi-party process involving all study area local governments, a joint strategy would create a strong foundation for ongoing St'át'imc and non-

¹ In this report, the term 'Local Governments' is intended to include Electoral Area A, Electoral Area B of the Squamish Lillooet Regional District (SLRD), the District Municipality of Lillooet, the Lillooet Tribal Council and the six northern St'át'imc communities located in the study area: Sekw'el'was (Cayoos Creek), Xwisten (Bridge River), T'it'q'et (Lillooet), Ts'kw'aylaxw (Pavilion), Xaxl'ip (Fountain) and Tsalalh (Seton Lake)

St'át'imc collaboration on economic revitalization and provide a framework for a consensus-based decision process to determine priorities and allocate scarce resources to achieve mutually agreed upon economic development objectives. Because of unresolved St'át'imc Title and Rights Issues, the strategy would focus on non-resource sectors, in particular tourism, local business retention and attraction, and agriculture (i.e., new product development, agri-tourism, viticulture, etc.). It is anticipated the initiative could be administered and/or supported by the SLRD. The total cost of this opportunity ranges between \$120,000 to \$170,000 depending upon final project scope and the level of community engagement. The total cost of the project would likely necessitate multiple funders. Key potential funding sources include the province's Northern Development Initiative Trust, Western Economic Partnership Agreement, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, the Real Estate Foundation and Tides Canada. These and other potential funding sources are outlined in Appendix A.

2. Local Economic Development Working Group

This opportunity would provide a venue for all local governments to explore cooperative economic development opportunities and assess existing economic development conditions in key sectors, such as tourism and agriculture. To be coordinated and/or supported by the SLRD in short-term (i.e., fiscal 2008), the group would include representatives from the study area's six St'át'imc communities, the District of Lillooet, Electoral Areas A and B, Lillooet Tribal Council, St'át'imc Chiefs Council, Upper St'át'imc Language and Culture Society, the Lillooet Chamber of Commerce and other relevant regional organizations and businesses. The Working Group would be guided by Terms of Reference and would meet at least quarterly. Anticipated costs range between \$15,000 and \$20,000 a year. Potential funding sources include the SLRD, particularly if they are able to allocate staff time for group coordination and management. To ensure continuity and build momentum of the initiative, multi-year funding should be sought. Other potential funding sources include the Union of BC Municipalities and the federal-provincial Western Economic Partnership Agreement. These and other potential funding sources are detailed in Appendix A.

3. St'át'imc Heritage and Learning Centre

The St'át'imc Heritage and Learning Centre is a long-term (i.e. to be developed post 2011) project that has been in development for over a decade. Spearheaded by the Upper St'át'imc Language, Culture and Education Society, the current concept plan envisages a 15,000 square foot facility that would include a display gallery, a performance space, artefact storage, an Elders' facility, a gift shop and classroom space for St'át'imc cultural programs. Given the cost and logistics involved in realizing the project, a smaller, temporary facility has been identified as first step, or first phase project. The so-called "store front" centre would operate while the permanent facility was developed. The total anticipated construction costs of the larger facility ranges between \$7 and \$10 million². Based on 2006 plans, the Store Front option would cost \$350,000 to develop and operate for two years. This represents \$150,000 in building renovation and development costs and \$200,000 for two year's operating costs³. Funding could be provided through a variety of potential funding sources, including Western Economic Diversification Canada, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada and others. These and other potential funding sources are outlined in Appendix A.

This report also provides a summary of five additional 'tier-two' opportunities that were highly ranked in the decision process: Destination Accommodation, Small Business Centre, Viticulture and other Horticultural Crops, Joint Tourism Media and Marketing Strategy, and New Visitors Centre.

² The project consultants worked with the St'át'imc Chiefs Council and the province's Integrated Land Management Bureau on a similar economic opportunities project in 2006. This study, *Opportunities and Impact Assessment of 2010 Winter Games - St'át'imc Territory*, provides more detailed, though now outdated, first order cost estimates. The Upper St'át'imc Language and Culture Society is also currently working on revising cost estimates and business plans for the proposed facility.

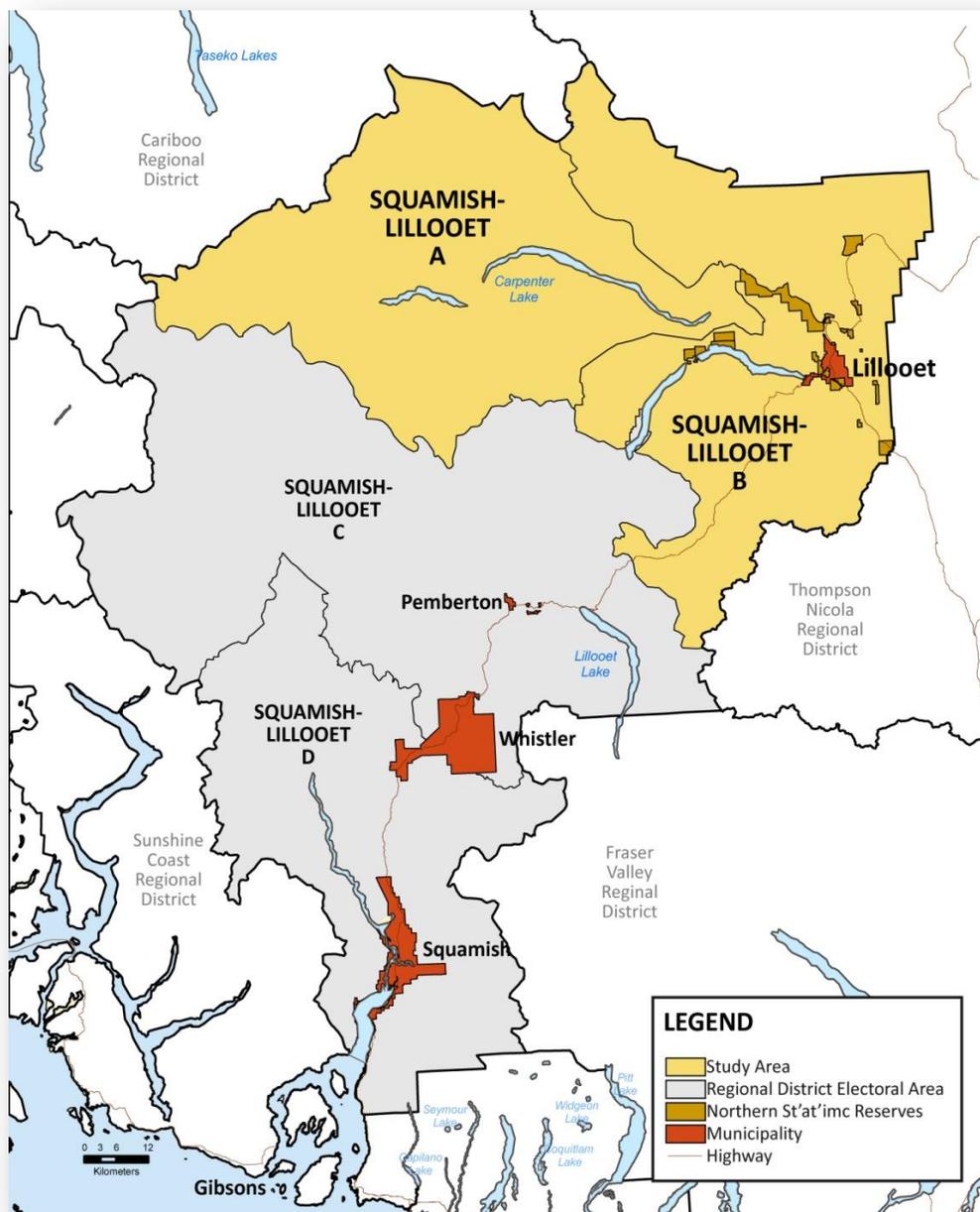
³ *Opportunities and Impact Assessment of 2010 Winter Games - St'át'imc Territory*. 2006.

STUDY AREA

Electoral Area A, Electoral Area B and the District of Lillooet make up the northern portion of the Squamish-Lillooet Regional District. It is a vast, relatively thinly populated 7,213 square kilometre area about 300 kilometres north of Vancouver.

The study area includes six northern St'át'imc communities: Sekw'el'was (Cayoose Creek), Xwisten (Bridge River), T'it'q'et (Lillooet), Ts'kw'aylaxw (Pavilion), Xaxl'ip (Fountain) and Tsalalh (Seton Lake). The six northern communities are clustered around the District of Lillooet which functions as the main economic hub and service centre for the communities.

Figure 1: Study Area Map



PROJECT PROCESS

The economic development opportunities summarized in this report were identified, evaluated and prioritized using a facilitated and structured decision-making process involving a project advisory committee made up of regional economic development stakeholders. The decision-making process was driven by this advisory committee and was designed to make transparent, objective and clear decisions on what economic development opportunities could be jointly pursued in the study area to achieve regional benefits and facilitate improved regional economic development collaboration and cooperation between and among all local governments.

The project's advisory committee was assembled with the assistance of the SLRD. Given project time constraints, members were not formally appointed by their organizations, therefore, members were not considered formal representatives from the local governments and organizations for which they work. However, the advisory committee represented some of the key economic development stakeholders in the study area and will all likely be involved in any future collaborative economic development efforts. Committee members included:

- Art Adolph, St'át'imc Chiefs Council
- Lisa Griffith, Planner, Squamish-Lillooet Regional District
- Bruce Jaffary, President, Lillooet Chamber of Commerce
- Susan James, Executive Director, Lillooet Tribal Council
- Norm Leech, T'it'q'et Economic Development Board
- Grant Loyer, Chief Administrative Officer, District of Lillooet
- Mickey Macri, SLRD Director, Area B
- Marilyn Napoleon, Upper St'át'imc Language, Culture and Education Society
- Kim Needham, Planner, Squamish-Lillooet Regional District
- Jerry Sucharyna, Economic Development Officer, District of Lillooet

The committee met three times during the course of the project. At the first workshop, five committee members brainstormed issues and challenges facing their communities' collective economic futures. Participants also brainstormed what economic opportunities that could be pursued to help address the identified issues. Following the meeting, the issues were converted into objectives by the consultants and organized into means and end objectives.

At the following meeting, the full committee reviewed and confirmed a revised list of economic development objectives that the project consultants had generated based on issues identified in the first meeting. The objectives were organized into 'means' objectives (i.e., supporting or subsidiary) and 'ends' objectives (i.e., final or overarching). Committee members reviewed, clarified and confirmed the list of objectives. Following this, they next ranked and weighted the end objectives. The activity clearly highlighted the closely shared values of the participants and the importance of achieving the process goals (e.g., building trust) as a prerequisite to achieving the more programmatic objectives (e.g., supporting new and existing businesses). The final objectives in order of preference for the whole group were:

1. Build trust among and between communities and governments
2. Improve quality of life for all
3. Foster understanding of what sustainability means in the region
4. Protect, promote and respect the culture and heritage of all communities
5. Create employment opportunities for people of all ages

6. Improve all local government capacities for joint planning and decision making
7. Support new and existing businesses
8. Increase the number and length of stay of visitors to the area

At the final meeting, the committee reviewed and ranked a list of 18 potential economic opportunities, or alternatives. The alternatives had been narrowed down by the project consultants from a larger list of 32 by combining and packaging similar and/or linked opportunities wherever realistic and feasible. Participants ranked these alternatives (see Table 3) while keeping in mind the following criteria:

- The opportunity's potential to generate broader regional benefits;
- The cooperation and collaboration (i.e., St'at'imc – non-St'at'imc) that could be required by each opportunity; and,
- How each opportunity responds to the identified economic development objectives.

The opportunities were (in no particular order):

- | | |
|--|---|
| • Adventure/Ecotourism | • Regular scheduled transportation service |
| • Artists' Guild | • Small Business Development Centre |
| • Destination Accommodation | • Solar – Wind Farm |
| • Festival / Event | • Specialty Forestry Products |
| • Joint Economic Development Strategy | • St'at'imc – Lillooet Tourism Media and Marketing strategy |
| • Live Theatre | • St'at'imc Heritage and Learning Centre |
| • Local Economic Development Working Group | • Store – Restaurant |
| • Log Home Village | • Tours and tour packages |
| • New Visitors Centre | • Viticulture and other Horticultural Crops |

Next, the participants reviewed a 'Consequence Table' (see Table 2) that illustrated how each of the opportunities scored when evaluated against the group's economic development objectives. The scoring was based on descriptive measures that were developed for each objective by the consultants (see Table 1). While reviewing and making recommendations to the Consequence Table, participants were also given a sheet that described the measures that were used for the scoring. The consultants reviewed the scoring of the opportunities with participants and discussed several areas to refine the scoring.

Next, participants went through an activity where they were able to compare how they ranked the economic development opportunities, both directly and using their ranked and weighted objectives. Each was shown a graph that indicated their ranking of opportunities directly and according to their weighted objectives. The top-three economic development opportunities (both by direct ranking of the opportunities and their prioritization based on individual's ranked and weighted objectives) were the Joint Economic Development Strategy, the Local Economic Development Working Group and the St'at'imc Heritage and Learning Centre.

The next tier of opportunities included: Destination Accommodation, Small Business Centre, Viticulture and other Horticultural Crops, Joint Tourism Media and Marketing Strategy, and New Visitors Centre.

The tables on the following pages show: 1) the descriptive measures developed by the project consultants for the technical assessment of the opportunities; 2) the resulting Consequence Table; and 3) a graph illustrating how the opportunities scored directly and with the weighted objectives.

Table 1: End Objective Measures

END OBJECTIVE	LOW	MEDIUM-LOW	MEDIUM	MEDIUM-HIGH	HIGH
Build trust among and between communities and governments	No or little change from current situation.	Project(s) <u>could</u> generate formal partnerships and inter-community activities (e.g., St'at'imc-non-St'at'imc joint venture, joint events & celebrations, co-funding, technical support, MoUs) between and among local government partners.		Project(s) <u>requires</u> formal partnerships and inter-community activities (e.g., St'at'imc-non-St'at'imc joint venture, joint events & celebrations, co-funding, technical support, MoUs) between and among local government partners.	
Improve quality of life for all	No or little change from current situation.	Project(s) supports <u>some</u> the improvement of provincial socio-economic and population health indicators, <i>or</i> allows area residents to meet more of their recreational, health, shopping and education needs in community.		Project(s) supports <u>both</u> the improvement of provincial socio-economic and population health indicators, and allows area residents to meet more of their recreational, health, shopping and education needs in community. ⁴	
Foster an understanding of what sustainability means in the region	No or little change from current situation.	The project(s) includes a sustainability component/focus, but does not facilitate the creation of a collaborative and mutually agreed upon definition of what sustainability means to the area.		The project(s) supports the development of a clear understanding of what sustainability means in the region <u>and</u> facilitates the creation of integrated, supportive policies and/or initiatives at all local governments in the study area.	
Protect, promote and respect the culture and heritage of all communities	No or little change from current situation.	Project(s) supports ongoing cultural revitalization initiatives.		Project(s) supports ongoing cultural revitalization <u>as well as</u> intercultural dialogue, activities, cultural events within a cooperative framework.	

⁴ BC Stats key quality of life indicators include: EI Beneficiaries (currently, 10th highest of 86 Local Health Areas [LHAs]); 25-54 year olds with completed post secondary (currently, 40th of 86 LHAs); Potential years of life lost due to natural causes (currently 11th highest of 86 LHAs); Children in care (currently 8th highest of 86 LHAs); Juvenile serious violent crime rate – average (currently 2nd highest of 78 LHAs 2003 to 2005). INAC maintains a Community Wellbeing Index for First Nations that could be used as the base line measure for study area First Nations.

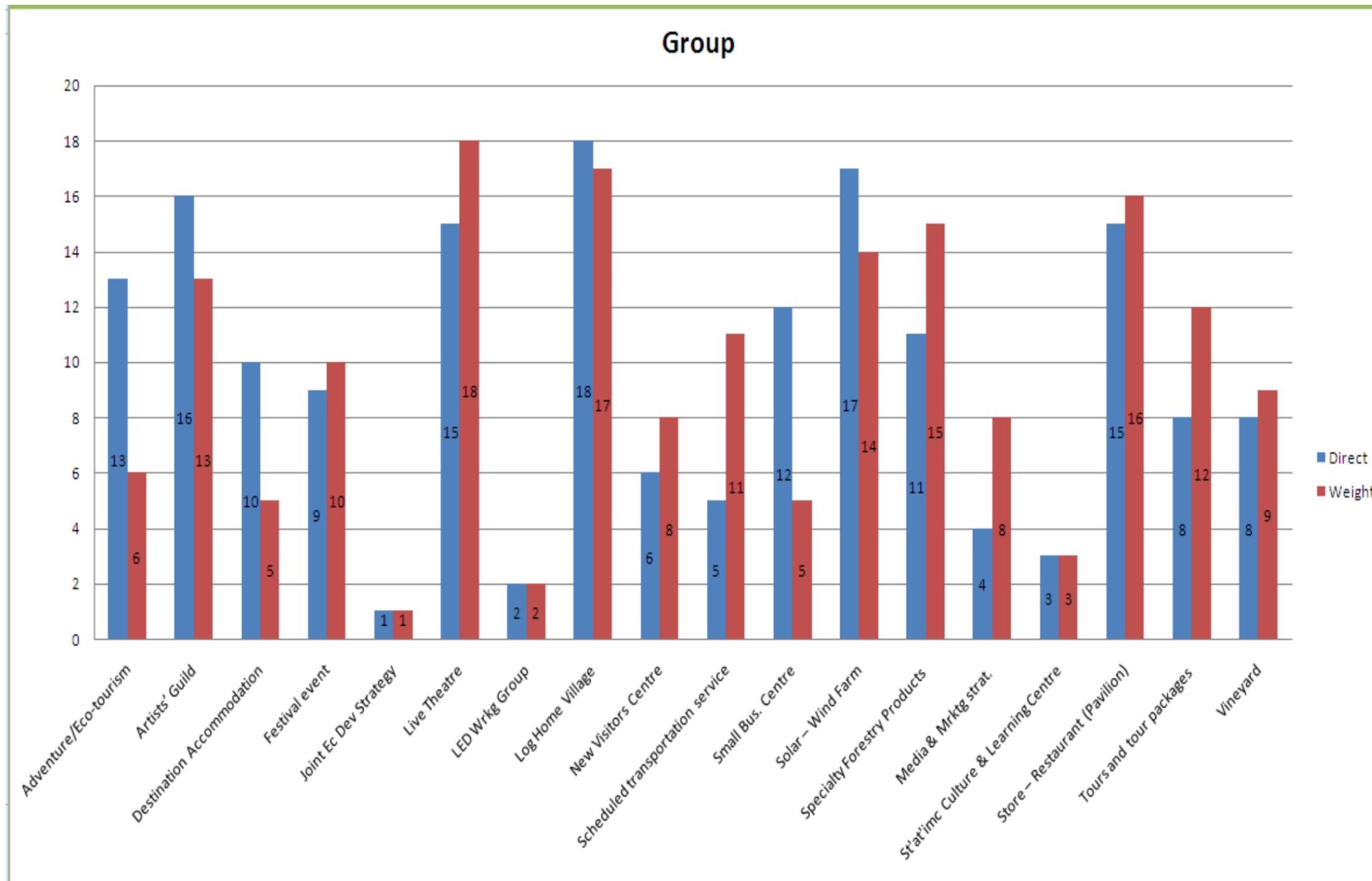
Table 1: End Objective Measures - continued

END OBJECTIVE	LOW	MEDIUM-LOW	MEDIUM	MEDIUM-HIGH	HIGH
<p>Improve all local government capacities for joint planning and decision making</p>	<p>No or little change from current situation.</p>	<p>Project(s) supports ad-hoc regional economic development cooperation, collaboration and joint project fundraising, implementation and management.</p>		<p>Project(s) requires formalized regional economic development cooperation, new technical capacities (e.g., Decision Analysis) collaboration and joint project fundraising, implementation and management.</p>	
<p>Support new and existing businesses</p>	<p>No or little change from current situation.</p>	<p>Project(s) facilitates and/or requires improvement of <i>either</i> hard or soft business infrastructure.</p>		<p>Project(s) facilitates and/or requires improvement of both hard infrastructure (e.g., roads, public transportation, internet, etc.) and soft infrastructure (e.g. training opportunities, business support services, etc.).</p>	
<p>Increase the number and length of stay of visitors to the area</p>	<p>No or little change from current situation.</p>	<p>Project(s) would help increase total visits, but not necessarily bed nights (i.e., overnight stays) and tourist spending.</p>		<p>Project(s) would help increase total visits, bed nights (i.e., overnight stays) and tourist spending.</p>	

Table 2: Consequence Table

Objectives \ Alternatives	Adventure/ Eco-tourism	Artists' Guild	Destination Accommoda tion	Festival event	Joint Ec Dev Strategy	Live Theatre	LED Wrkg Group	Log Home Village	New Visitors Centre	Scheduled transportati on service	Small Bus. Centre	Solar – Wind Farm	Specialty Forestry Products	Media & Mrktg strat.	St'at'imc Culture & Learning	Store – Restaurant (Pavilion)	Tours and tour packages	Vineyard
Build trust	M	M	M-L	M	H	M-L	M-H	M-L	M	M	M	M	M	M	M-H	L	M-L	M
Improve quality of life	M	M-L	M	M-L	M-H	M-L	M	L	M-L	M-H	M	M-L	L	M-L	M	M	M-L	M-L
Sustainability	M	M-L	M-L	M-L	H	L	H	L	M-L	L	M-L	M	M-L	M-L	M	L	L	M-L
Culture and heritage	M-L	M-H	M-L	M-H	M-H	M-L	M-H	M-L	M	L	M-L	L	M-L	M	H	L	M-L	M-L
Employment	M	M-L	H	M	M-H	M-L	M	M-L	M	L	M-H	M-L	M	M	M	M	M	M-H
Local government capacities	M-L	L	M-L	M-L	H	L	M-H	M-L	M	M	M	M	M-L	M	M	L	M-L	M
New and existing businesses	M	M-L	M	M	M-H	L	M-H	L	M-H	M-H	H	L	M-L	M-H	M-H	M-L	M-H	M
Increase visitors	M-H	M-L	H	M	M	M-L	M-L	M	M	M-H	M-L	L	L	M	M-H	M-L	M-H	M-H
RELATIVE SCORE	30	22.5	30	30	60	10	50	10	32.5	25	37.5	20	20	32.5	45	12.5	22.5	30

Table 3: Economic Opportunities Scoring – Direct and Weighted



Note: Higher scores are represented by smaller bars

PRIORITIZED ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES

This section provides an overview of the top three prioritized opportunities. While the opportunities were not subject to a detailed feasibility analysis due to the project's constrained timeline, the overview includes information on opportunity phasing, preliminary costs, required resources, and partner roles and responsibilities. The three opportunities are presented in order of a suggested phasing from short-term (i.e., fiscal 2008) to long-term (i.e., post 2011).

Following the opportunity summaries, the five tier-two opportunities that were highly ranked in the decision process are also briefly summarized. The five tier-two economic development opportunities are: Destination Accommodation, Small Business Centre, Vineyard-Agriculture, Joint Tourism Media and Marketing Strategy, and New Visitors Centre.

LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT WORKING GROUP

Summary

As evidenced through this study's planning process, local governments in the area share many common objectives with respect to generating a diversified and sustainable economy for the region. Working in a manner that is consistent with the values and rights of both the northern St'át'imc communities and other local governments in the region, a Local Economic Development Working Group would provide a venue for all local governments to:

- Explore and develop cooperative and/or joint economic development opportunities;
- Assess existing economic development conditions on key topic areas that may include, but are not restricted to, key sectors including tourism and agricultural development;
- Consider jointly hosting local economic development forums with an emphasis on attracting business, investors, joint venture partners;
- Support and assist joint economic opportunity fund raising and project development; and,
- Develop initiatives to promote and market the region to investors, tourists and businesses.

The Working Group could be coordinated and/or supported by SLRD. The group would include representatives from the study area's six St'át'imc communities, the SLRD, the District of Lillooet, Electoral Areas A and B, Lillooet Tribal Council, St'át'imc Chiefs Council, the Upper St'át'imc Language, Culture and Education Society, the Lillooet Chamber of Commerce and other relevant regional organizations and businesses.

The Working Group would be guided by Terms of Reference or Memorandum of Understanding and would meet at least quarterly. All meetings should be open to the public with meeting materials available on a dedicated Working Group website⁵. A draft Memorandum of Understanding is included in Appendix B.

⁵ It is assumed that SLRD could create, host and maintain a dedicated Joint Economic Development Working Group page on their website.

Rationale

The Local Economic Development Working Group was recognized by members of advisory committee as an important initiative with many potential benefits. Some of the key community economic development objectives the opportunity meets (i.e., scoring High or Medium-High in the technical analysis) includes:

- ✓ Build trust among and between communities and governments
- ✓ Protect, promote and respect the culture and heritage of all communities
- ✓ Foster understanding of what sustainability means in the region
- ✓ Improve all local government capacities for joint planning and decision making
- ✓ Support new and existing businesses

Phasing

The opportunity is both relatively inexpensive and more logistically straightforward than the other top-ranked opportunities. As such, the Local Economic Development Working Group could be realized in the **short-term** (i.e., fiscal 2008). In addition, the Working Group could help facilitate, support and expedite the Joint Economic Development Strategy opportunity and the St'át'imc Culture and Learning Centre opportunity.

The Local Economic Development Working Group opportunity could be considered a 'Quick Start' project. That is, it would result in a tangible action 'on the ground' that could both help build momentum for additional projects and be used to help support and leverage funding for the two other high-ranking opportunities.

Preliminary Costs and Resources

The total anticipated cost of this economic development opportunity is \$15,000 to \$20,000 a year. The cost is based on four to five meetings annually and includes food, room rental and staff time to organize the meetings (including communications, agendas, facilitation, note taking and follow-up). Potential funding sources include the SLRD, particularly if they are able to allocate staff time for group coordination and management. To ensure continuity and build momentum of the initiative, multi-year funding should be sought.

Other potential funding sources include the Union of BC Municipalities through their Governance Capacity Program for Shared Local Government & First Nation Initiatives and BC's Ministry of Economic Development through the Western Economic Partnership Agreement. Tides Canada could also be approached to provide funding. These and other potential funding sources are detailed in Appendix A.

Partner Roles and Responsibilities

The key preliminary organizer for the Local Economic Development Working Group is likely the SLRD. The SLRD could fundraise for the initiative, inform, organize and coordinate working group stakeholders, and help manage and/or facilitate the first few meetings (after which point the meeting chair, facilitation and reporting duties should be rotated through the Working Group).

JOINT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

Summary

A comprehensive Joint Economic Development Strategy is a critical component for the effective, long-term and sustainable economic development of the study area. To be developed through a multi-party process involving all study area local governments, a joint strategy would create a strong foundation for ongoing St'át'imc and non- St'át'imc collaboration on economic revitalization and diversification in the region.

The completed strategy would provide a framework or roadmap for economic development in the study area and provide a consensus-based decision process to determine priorities and allocate scarce resources to achieve mutually agreed upon economic development objectives. The final strategy would incorporate local values (e.g., socially and environmentally sustainable development) and utilize economic drivers (e.g., value-added resource use, local skills training, retention of local income, regional cooperation).

In appreciation of the unresolved St'át'imc Title and Rights Issues, the strategy could focus on multiple, non-resource sectors, including tourism, local business retention and attraction, and agriculture (new product development and marketing, agri-tourism, viticulture).

Rationale

A comprehensive, regional economic development strategy has also long been recognized as a top priority by local governments in the study area. As such, the Joint Economic Development Strategy was recognized by members of advisory committee the highest scoring opportunity evaluated. The opportunity scored either High or Medium-High against all but one of the end objectives, including:

- ✓ Build trust among and between communities and governments
- ✓ Improve quality of life for all
- ✓ Foster understanding of what sustainability means in the region
- ✓ Protect , promote and respect the culture and heritage of all communities
- ✓ Create employment opportunities for people of all ages
- ✓ Improve all local government capacities for joint planning and decision making
- ✓ Support new and existing businesses

Phasing

The time required to both fund and carry out the Joint Economic Development Strategy make this opportunity a **medium-term** (i.e., 2009 - 2010) action. All local governments would be required to formally agree to undertake the project and actively commit administrative staff to work on it through the project's Advisory Committee. Given the scale, scope and complexity of the project, outside technical and facilitation support would likely be required.

Preliminary Costs and Resources

The total anticipated cost of this economic development opportunity is \$120,000 to \$170,000. The cost includes external consulting time which would include technical and facilitation support and, potentially, overall project management. A formal Advisory Committee would need to be formally appointed by local governments to work on the project. Meeting costs, travel allowances and a broader community engagement process are also factored in. Project costs would vary considerably based on the amount of public engagement desired and/or required. To ensure transparency, all project materials would need to

be made available on a dedicated project website and regular project newsletters would need to be sent to all residents in the study area.

The total cost of the project may necessitate multiple funders. All participating local governments should support the initiative, either in-kind or financially. Key potential funding sources include the province's Northern Development Initiative Trust, Western Economic Partnership Agreement (WEPA), Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (Community Economic Development Program), the Real Estate Foundation (Communities in Transition Program) and Tides Canada. These and other potential funding sources are outlined in Appendix A.

Partner Roles and Responsibilities

As with the Local Economic Development Working Group, the key start-up organizer for the Joint Economic Development Strategy is likely the SLRD. It is recommended that a simple Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) be developed in advance of fund raising that outlines the scope, objectives and stakeholders to be involved (see *Appendix B*). This agreement or MoU would need to be developed by the SLRD and signed onto by all local governments in the region.

The SLRD would also take the lead in developing funding applications for the project and on coordinating the request for proposals for a consultant(s) to support the project once funding was in place. Finally, the SLRD would assist in assembling the project Advisory Committee and community outreach materials.



Participants discuss their economic development objectives at the second advisory committee meeting at the Lillooet Tribal Council (July 30, 2008)

ST'ÁT'IMC HERITAGE AND LEARNING CENTRE

Summary

The St'át'imc Heritage and Learning Centre is a long-term project that has been in development for over a decade. It is supported by multiple governments and organizations in the study area, including the St'át'imc Chiefs Council and the Lillooet Tribal Council. Spearheaded by the Upper St'át'imc Language, Culture and Education Society, the current concept plan envisages a 15,000 square foot facility located in central Lillooet that would include:

- A museum/gallery
- A performing arts theatre
- Classrooms
- Artefact storage
- A language laboratory
- Arts and crafts workshop
- A publication centre
- An elders lounge
- A gift shop
- Library/conference facility

It is intended that the St'át'imc Heritage and Learning Centre will become a registered training institute with the ability to deliver accredited language courses and eventually other accredited training programs. Training programs would serve both St'át'imc and non-St'át'imc communities.

Given the cost and logistics involved in realizing the project, a smaller, temporary Heritage and Learning Centre has been identified as first step, or first phase project. The so-called “store front” centre would offer booking and marketing services for St'át'imc cultural tours, arts, curio, and other retail sales, and public washrooms for travelers. As previously envisioned, it could be developed in partnership with the District of Lillooet in an existing building located in central Lillooet near the existing Visitors Centre in Downton Park⁶. The smaller facility would operate for a minimum of three years while the larger, permanent facility was developed.

Rationale

The St'át'imc Heritage and Learning Centre concept is supported by both St'át'imc and non-St'át'imc governments and organizations in the study area. When it is finally realized, it is widely anticipated that the facility will function as both a tourist destination and attraction and function as major community hub for a variety of programs and businesses. Some of the key community economic development objectives the opportunity meets (i.e., scoring High or Medium-High in the technical analysis) include:

- ✓ Build trust among and between communities and governments
- ✓ Protect , promote and respect the culture and heritage of all communities
- ✓ Support new and existing businesses
- ✓ Increase the number and length of stay of visitors to the area⁷

⁶ The District of Lillooet unsuccessfully sought funding for a major redevelopment of the area to improve bus parking, provide public washrooms for visitors and to better integrate St'at'imc cultural ventures with the District's tourist infrastructure. Other potential locations were suggested along Main Street, Lillooet.

⁷ Of the three prioritized opportunities, it is the only one to have scored highly in this objective.

Phasing

The St'át'imc Heritage and Learning Centre is the most costly and logistically challenging of the top three economic development opportunities. As such, the opportunity will not be realized until the **long-term** (i.e., post 2011). The Store Front option could be realized in the **medium-term** (i.e., 2009 - 2010).

Preliminary Costs and Resources

The total anticipated construction costs of the facility ranges between \$7 and \$10 million⁸. Based on 2006 plans, the Store Front option would cost \$350,000 to develop and operate the facility for two years. This represents \$150,000 in hard costs (building renovation and development costs) and \$100,000 for two year's operating costs⁹.

Given the scale of the project, funding would necessarily come from a variety of potential funding sources. Some of these include Western Economic Diversification Canada, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, the province's New Relationship Trust, Human Resources Development Canada/Service Canada, BC Hydro and numerous private foundations. These and other potential funding sources are outlined in Appendix A.

Partner Roles and Responsibilities

The Upper St'át'imc Language, Culture and Education Society has been and remains the project's long-term organizer and major driver. However, given the scale of the project and its considerable fundraising requirements, it will be important to involve all local governments and organizations in the project. While the project is, and should remain, a St'át'imc project, the formal support of non-St'át'imc communities will greatly assist with project fundraising.

A memorandum of understanding (MoU) should also be developed with the District of Lillooet regarding locating the facility in central Lillooet. This MoU would build on former informal agreements that were made and help both the District of Lillooet and the Upper St'át'imc Language, Culture and Education Society better understand the infrastructure and development issues associated with the project.

A formal agreement or MoU with northern St'át'imc communities on the project, its location and funding requirements would also help move fundraising forward and, potentially, help leverage additional funds.

⁸ The project consultants worked with the St'át'imc Chiefs Council and the province's Integrated Land Management Bureau on a similar economic opportunities project in 2006. This study, *Opportunities and Impact Assessment of 2010 Winter Games - St'át'imc Territory*, provides more detailed, though now outdated, first order cost estimates. The Upper St'át'imc Language and Culture Society is also currently working on revising cost estimates and business plans for the proposed facility.

⁹ *Opportunities and Impact Assessment of 2010 Winter Games - St'át'imc Territory*. 2006.

OTHER ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

This section briefly summarizes, the five, ‘tier-two’ opportunities that were also relatively highly ranked in the decision process. As with the top-three opportunities reviewed in the previous sub-section, they presented in order of a suggested phasing from short-term (i.e., fiscal 2009) to long-term (i.e., post 2012). The phasing timelines are longer than those used for the earlier opportunities. As noted, some of the opportunities summarized below could be combined with the top-three opportunities outlined earlier.

- **Joint Tourism Media and Marketing Strategy:** The Joint Tourism Media and Marketing Strategy is the only potential short-term (i.e., fiscal 2009) opportunity of the five. This is partly because it is the least costly of the five *and* could be combined with other nearer term opportunities, particularly the Local Economic Development Working Group and the Joint Economic Development Strategy. With the 2010 Winter Olympic Games fast approaching, it would also be valuable to have such a strategy in place to help capture and leverage potential Games-related media exposure.

The development of the strategy would need to involve local governments, tourist businesses and community tourism stakeholders. An effective strategy would build on recent rebranding efforts and create a strategy that would:

- Develop a unique regional tourism brand and identity integrating both St’át’imc and non-St’át’imc imagery;
- Create a palette of marketing materials for the local market with an accompanying distribution strategy;
- Generate an integrated media strategy for press, TV and web to grow awareness of the region and take advantage of upcoming events such as the 2010 games;
- Outline primary markets both geographical and by user to group; and,
- Suggest required infrastructure, hard and soft, for the area to successfully cater to a growing tourism market.

The strategy should be developed by a professional marketing firm with tourism experience, including cultural and ecotourism. Costs would vary by the firm, but it is anticipated that strategy would cost no more than \$50,000.

- **Small Business Centre:** This facility could provide educational programming and services that match St’át’imc and non-St’át’imc local labour market training needs (for both adults and youth). It is anticipated that the facility could offer a mix of free, subsidized and fee-for-service programs and services that are responsive to the business and training needs of the community, including:
 - A small business support centre (i.e., administrative and technical assistance);
 - A community job bank and matching service;
 - Construction trades training and certification programs (primarily residential and commercial building construction);
 - Office administration training programs;
 - Employment support services (e.g., internet job searching, resume writing, employment referrals, one-to-one support and encouragement, administrative support, etc.);
 - Adult basic education and college upgrading courses; and,

- Temporary, extension or distance education training programs (e.g., Tourism BC training programs – Super Host, Nicola Valley Institute of Technology extension and distance education programs and courses, etc.).

The Centre would operate as an independent training body, but would work closely with the District of Lillooet, Lillooet Tribal Council, St'át'imc Chiefs Council, the Lillooet Friendship Centre, education coordinators from St'át'imc bands, the local School Board, Thompson Rivers University, the District of Lillooet, the Chamber of Commerce and local businesses and employers.

The centre could be combined with the St'át'imc Heritage and Learning Centre as has been identified in some St'át'imc concept plans.

The cost of the Business Centre would vary greatly depending upon the final facility program, location and scope.

- **Visitors Centre:** A new Visitors Centre is proposed for the Lillooet Area. Located either downtown or near the highway junction and bridge, the new facility would replace the current tourist information site at the Lillooet Museum. Some of the features discussed for the new facility include:
 - Full service, year-round tourist information and booking services for both St'át'imc and non-St'át'imc ventures;
 - 'Green' architecture and energy systems;
 - Bus parking;
 - Washrooms;
 - Picnic facilities; and,
 - A small amphitheatre for outdoor community events and shows.

A new Visitors Centre would not be without its challenges. The current facility, operated by the Lillooet Historical Society, would likely not be supportive of such a venture and a considerable community debate would be likely. However, it is widely acknowledged the current facility is old and sub-standard. It is not wheelchair accessible, has no bus parking facilities, has inadequate and difficult to reach washrooms (for some senior and less mobile visitors), and is poorly signed.

A new Visitors Centre could be combined with other opportunities, in particular the St'át'imc Heritage and Learning Centre and the Small Business Centre.

As with the Business Centre, the costs of the Visitors Centre would vary greatly depending upon the final facility program, location and scope.

- **Viticulture and other Horticultural Crops:** One of most anticipated potential opportunities is wine making. Currently, a comprehensive study is underway to assess the area for viticulture (wine grapes). This project was initiated in 2005 when 1,800 grape vines of different varieties were planted on local properties. The vines are being closely monitored along with local weather conditions. The study will be completed in 2009. It is hoped that the area can support a thriving wine business and provide an attractive, less costly alternative to the Okanagan for wine production.

An important component of the grape trials will be the weather data information collected. The area has significant potential for expansion of horticultural crops given the long summer growing season. The weather information generated by the viticulture study could support the expansion of other long-season crops in the area, including tomatoes, corn, peppers and melons.

Should the study be a success and/or prove out the potential of viticulture in the region, it is likely that new investment will be attracted to the area given the cost and limited available land available in the Okanagan. This will be especially true if the area shows better potential than new emerging wine growing areas in the Fraser Valley, Gulf Islands and southern Vancouver Island.

The potential of a St'át'imc joint venture similar to style and full-service amenities of Nk'Mip Cellars in Osoyoos is often raised.

- **Destination Accommodation:** One of the region's most cited challenges is its lack of a higher end, resort style destination accommodation that would not only help attract additional visitors to the region, but allow them to spend longer in the area. While a larger ski resort is not supported by the St'át'imc and some others, there is wide spread support for a front- (i.e., Lillooet) or near-country (e.g., Pavilion, Seton Portage) facility. Multiple potential features or amenities for such a facility have been identified, including:
 - Conference facilities;
 - Spa and personal health and wellness facilities;
 - Golf;
 - Horseback riding;
 - Vineyard and tasting room;
 - Higher end restaurant/food services; and,
 - Eco, cultural and adventure tours.

To provide and support even basic amenities, the destination accommodation would likely need to meet provincial resort definition thresholds, or a minimum of 100 beds in 50 rooms. An investor or, should the St'át'imc decide to pursue such an initiative, a joint venture partner would be required to both finance the facility and provide operating oversight (currently, there is not sufficient local capacity to manage such a facility).

The province's Resort Development Branch works closely with other government ministries, agencies, local governments, First Nations, the public, resort operators, and investors to support and facilitate new and expanded resort developments (particularly on Crown lands) and could be approached to assist on this potential opportunity.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

The following tables outline some potential funding programs for implementing the economic development opportunities. It is broken into federal, provincial, regional-local government and foundation sections. The list is not comprehensive and is meant only to highlight some of the key potential sources. Multiple foundation and government sources are not identified. There are also the following three search engines available for information on potential economic opportunity funding sources:

- **Aboriginal Funding Tool** - <http://www.aboriginalcanada.gc.ca/acp/apps/fundingtool.nsf/>
Administered by Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC), the Aboriginal Canada Portal is an online gateway to government and Aboriginal on-line resources such as funding, contacts, programs and services for Aboriginal Canadians.
- **CivicInfo BC** - <http://www.civicinfo.bc.ca/>
CivicInfo is a co-operative information service for those who work, or have an interest in BC's local government sector. They maintain a resource-rich website which includes a funding resource database.
- **Community Futures Greater Trail** - http://communityfutures.com/cms/Funding_Sources.2.0.html
Community Futures Development Corporation of Greater Trail provides an extensive funding source database that is applicable for rural communities throughout B.C. looking to undertake local economic development initiatives . The database is unique amongst B.C.'s Community Futures organizations.

Federal

Program	Summary	Contact	Applicability
Western Economic Partnership Agreement (WEPA)	The Western Economic Partnership Agreement (WEPA) is a joint federal/provincial program that supports economic development BC. Western Economic Diversification Canada and the BC Ministry of Economic Development equally fund WEPA. The key priority areas under WEPA are tourism, sustainable communities, entrepreneurship and innovation. All proposals submitted for consideration must identify a secured source of funding and demonstrate broad benefits to an industry, sector or region. Nearly all program funding has been committed.	Ministry of Economic Development Infrastructure Development Branch Phone: 250- 952-0648	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Joint Economic Development Strategy ✓ Local Economic Development Working Group

Federal

Program	Summary	Contact	Applicability
Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) - Community Economic Development Opportunity Program	Provides core financial support for First Nation communities for public services in economic development. The financial support is intended for community economic development planning and capacity development initiatives, development of proposals and leveraging financial resources, and carrying out economic development activities. Fall call letter. New Year funding award. No set limit	British Columbia Region 600 - 1138 Melville St Vancouver V6E 4S3 Phone: 604- 666-7891 Fax: 604- 775-7149 Website: www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/pr/pub/ywtk/sgp05_e.html	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Joint Economic Development Strategy ✓ Local Economic Development Working Group
INAC – First Nations Infrastructure Fund	A \$131million federal fund with a \$17 million allocation for BC that is targeted to improve community planning and infrastructure in First Nation communities. One of the program’s objectives includes the enhancement of collaboration between First Nation communities and other local governments. Application dates for 2009/10 will be announced in the fall.	Phone: 604-775-5100 Toll-free 1-800-567-9604 Fax: 604-666-6474 Email: bcinfo@inac-ainc.gc.ca	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Joint Economic Development Strategy ✓ Local Economic Development Working Group ✓ Heritage and Learning Centre

Provincial

Program	Summary	Contact	Applicability
Northern Development Initiative Trust	The Northern Development Initiative was established in October 2004 with a \$135-million trust to give northern communities the funding, control and ability to identify and pursue new opportunities for stimulating sustainable economic growth and job creation in the Peace, Prince George, Northwest and Cariboo-Chilcotin/Lillooet regions.	301-1268 Fifth Avenue Prince George, BC V2L 3L2 Phone: (250) 561-2525 Fax: (250) 561-2563 Email: admin@nditrust.ca	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Joint Economic Development Strategy ✓ Local Economic Development Working Group
BC Hydro Community Initiatives	BC Hydro's Community Investment department offers support to environment and sustainability, youth and education, people and leadership, aboriginal relationships, and community initiatives in the communities they serve. Visit the BC Hydro website for more information.	Edna Alle, BC Hydro Community Investment Phone: 604-623-3617 Fax: 604-623-3937 Email: edna.alle@bchydro.com Web: www.bchydro.com/community/	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Joint Economic Development Strategy ✓ Local Economic Development Working Group

Provincial

Program	Summary	Contact	Applicability
New Relationship Trust – Economic Development	The New Relationship Trust supports programs in five areas: Education, Capacity Building, Culture & Language, Youth & Elders, and Economic Development.	Cheryl Cardinal Program Officer 1008 - 100 Park Royal S. West Vancouver V7T 1A2 ccardinal@nrtf.ca Phone: 604-925-3338 Toll-free:1-877-922-3338 Fax: 604-925-3348	✓ Joint Economic Development Strategy ✓ Local Economic Development Working Group ✓ Heritage and Learning Centre
Native Economic Development Advisory Board	Established in 1988, the Board supports sustainable Aboriginal economic development throughout BC and helps administer the First Citizens Fund, a provincial fund established to enhance economic development, social and cultural opportunities for BC First Nations. Program goals include: enhancing employment opportunities, capacity development, and promoting the socio-economic self-reliance.	Director, Economic Initiatives Intergovernmental and Community Relations Branch Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation PO Box 9100 Stn Prov Govt Victoria, BC V8W 9B1 Phone: 250 387-2536 Fax: 250 356-9467	✓ Joint Economic Development Strategy ✓ Local Economic Development Working Group

Regional and Local Government Agencies

Program	Summary	Contact	Applicability
Fraser Basin Council - Smart Planning for Communities	Smart Planning for Communities is a BC-wide collaborative initiative that provides support to local and First Nations governments in developing integrated community sustainability plans or planning processes. Program facilitators will also help facilitate collaboration and partnerships across rural-urban boundaries and across aboriginal and non-aboriginal communities.	Diana Dilworth Fraser Basin Council 1st Fl - 470 Granville St Vancouver, BC V6C 1V5 ddilworth@fraserbasin.bc.ca www.fraserbasin.bc.ca Fax: 604-488-5351	✓ Joint Economic Development Strategy ✓ Local Economic Development Working Group
Union of BC Municipalities - Governance Capacity Program for Shared Local Government & First Nation Initiatives	Matching grants of up to \$25,000 are available to support activities that help local governments and First Nations to work together on common governance-related issues, to participate in capacity building activities or events that address the issues and, at the same time, build governance management skills, knowledge, abilities and understanding.	Danyta Welch Policy & Programs Officer Local Government Program Services UBCM/Municipal House 545 Superior Street Victoria, BC V8V 1X4 Phone: 250-356-5134 Fax: 250-356-5119 Email: dwelch@civicnet.bc.ca	✓ Joint Economic Development Strategy ✓ Local Economic Development Working Group

Regional and Local Government Agencies

Program	Summary	Contact	Applicability
Union of BC Municipalities – C2C Forum Program	The C2C Forum program was designed to help local governments and First Nations connect. A small grant, funded jointly by the provincial and federal governments, covers half of the allowable costs of the venue, food and planning for a C2C forum. Forums are completely led and organized by the communities involved, and give participants the opportunity to get to know each other and work together.	See previous	✓ Local Economic Development Working Group

Foundations

Program	Summary	Contact	Applicability
Real Estate Foundation – Communities in Transition Program	Communities in Transition (CIT) is a partnership initiative designed to assist communities in planning for the use and conservation of their land. The program strives to help communities plan for transition and address impacts arising from specific and cumulative events or the erosion of traditional economies and social structure. CIT considers economic development and community planning in the context of land use planning. The program also encourages and supports partnerships and collaboration between planners, administrators, local governments, real estate brokers and analysts, environmental stewardship and conservation organizations, government agencies, aboriginal communities, community organizations and elected officials.	Jen McCaffrey Grants Officer 570-355 Burrard St. Vancouver V6C 2G8 604-688-6800 ext 108 1-866-912-6800 Fax 604-688-3669	✓ Economic Development Strategy ✓ Local Economic Development Working Group
Tides Canada	Tides supports charities and projects working to address economic and social marginalization in Canada. They focus on initiatives that engage in policy research and civic engagement, public communication strategies, and direct community programming. Tides has focused on rural populations and First Nations. One of the key focuses of their current social justice agenda is raising the living wage and improving access to employment.	680-220 Cambie St. Vancouver V6B 2M9 604-647-6611 1-866-780-6611 http://tidescanada.org	✓ Economic Development Strategy ✓ Local Economic Development Working Group

APPENDIX B: LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT WORKING GROUP - DRAFT MOU

Memorandum of Understanding – Local Economic Development Working Group

1. Purpose

The signatories to this Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) share many common objectives with respect to generating a diversified and sustainable economy in the region. They have signed on to the MoU with the intention and desire to promote joint and cooperative economic development and diversification in common areas of interest in a manner that is consistent with the values and rights of the St'át'imc and the values and rights of the residents of the District of Lillooet and Electoral Areas A and B of the Squamish-Lillooet Regional District.

The signatories to this MoU agree that the Local Economic Development Working Group will meet as may be required to:

- Explore and develop cooperative and/or joint economic development opportunities and recommend proposals to increase the economic health of the region;
- Assess existing economic development conditions on key topic areas that may include, but are not restricted to, key sectors including tourism and agricultural development;
- Consider jointly hosting local economic development forums with an emphasis on attracting business, investors, joint venture partners;
- Support and assist joint economic opportunity fund raising and project development; and,
- Develop initiatives to promote and market the region to investors, tourists and businesses.
- To provide written and verbal reports to any local government or agency, as may be requested.

2. Membership

The Local Economic Development Working Group will consist of senior administrators and staff from:

- District of Lillooet
- Squamish-Lillooet Regional District (representing both Electoral Areas A & B)
- Lillooet Tribal Council
- St'át'imc Chiefs Council
- Sekw'el'was (Cayoosé Creek)
- Xwisten (Bridge River)
- T'it'q'et (Lillooet)
- Ts'kw'aylaxw (Pavilion)
- Xaxl'ip (Fountain)
- Tsalalh (Seton Lake)
- Upper St'át'imc Language and Culture Society
- Lillooet Chamber of Commerce

Other regional economic development stakeholders may sign on to the MoU with the consent of current signatories. All members shall be committed to building on the cooperative economic development planning and government-to-government work that has been carried out in the region.

3. Responsibilities

Members need to be committed to the joint and cooperative regional economic development, regularly attend meetings, take part in some of the public outreach events, and read the materials sent out in advance of the meetings to help provide informed feedback.

Members agree to carry out the activities outlined above in point 1. In addition, it is requested that members act as “community ambassadors” and help communicate committee discussions to the larger region, both informally and through more formal committee communications (e.g., in interviews in project newsletters, at community events, in the media, etc.).

4. Process

The Local Economic Development Working Group will meet every 10 to 12 weeks. Members will be given sufficient notice of any meeting and receive an agenda and background material prior to the meeting. Meeting minutes will be kept and Members will be encouraged to contribute to the agenda.

The working group is supported by the SLRD who are responsible for coordinating meetings, agendas and sharing meeting results with the broader community. Chair duties will be rotated through the full membership with a new Chair for each meeting.